

Executive Registry
17-2469/1

11-13-1977 O-5  
J3 Dept

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA : Acting Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : Paul V. Walsh  
Associate Director-Management  
National Foreign Assessment Center

SUBJECT : Status of Study of CIA-White House Television Link

1. Action Requested: None; for information only. This memorandum reports on the status of your request for a staff study on establishing a television circuit between CIA Headquarters Building and the White House Situation Room.

2. Background: The staff study you requested has been initiated and will cover the following points:

- status of planning for a television production facility in Headquarters,
- secure transmission facility requirements, costs, and lead times, and
- television programming options.

It is anticipated that the study will be ready for your review within 90 to 120 days (i.e., sometime in February 1978). This length of time is required because of the complexities involved in determining equipment requirements, availability, and costs, and the need to study in detail various transmission modes and routing options.

3. Staff Position: This memorandum has been coordinated with the Office of Communications.

EXECUTIVE REGISTRY

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Paul V. Walsh

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

*The Operations Center*

77-2469

23 September 1977

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Assistant to the Director  
Public Affairs

Per our telephone chat here is a copy of  
the note I got. It is pretty straight forward  
reporting except that the implications paragraphs  
may be a little overdrawn.



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Vincent J. Heyman  
Director

28 SEP 1977

*Why don't we look in?*

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15 September 1977

1. Recently, the National Military Command Center received permission to establish a secure TV link between the Pentagon and the White House. It is not clear where the impetus for the link originated, but it seems certain that the decision was cleared and coordinated at the highest levels.
2. Details on the link are sketchy at the moment, but I am told that work is to proceed as rapidly as possible--and at the outside it will take no more than three months for the system to become fully operational.
3. Just how and who will use the link is also unclear. On the Pentagon end, the link could be restricted to a small few, the Secretary of Defense, CJCS, and the Director, DIA. Since the terminals will rest in the NMCC Crisis Area and the White House Situation Room respectively, however, I tend to believe that there will be much greater access to the system. For instance, it could be used to relay daily operational and intelligence briefings. At the very least, the system almost certainly will be employed to relay information during times of crisis.

#### IMPLICATIONS

4. The implications are both obvious and far-reaching. A secure, closed TV net between the Pentagon and the White House permits the quick flow of information (verbal and pictorial) from the NMCC/NMIC to the President's office, if so desired. The NMCC already has a secure TV capability to the ANMCC near Camp David--again the implications are obvious.

5. Finally, the NMCC is far ahead of any other unit in Washington regarding the techniques and skills necessary to display special data through the TV media. They built their system a year ago at a cost of several million. It is manned round the clock.

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TRANSMISSION SLIP

TO: DDI

ROOM NO. BUILDING

REMARKS:

FROM: SD/OC

ROOM NO. BUILDING EXTENSION

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